

LINGERING SHADOW

BERNARD GAVZER
and
SID MOODY

AP Newsfeature Writers

Warren Report critics Edward Jay Epstein and Mark Lane plug hard for their theory that a gunman fired at President John F. Kennedy from a grassy knoll overlooking the president's motorcade, but they tiptoe past some salient facts.

There was the question of smoke, presumably from a rifle, spotted on the knoll. Their already shaky arguments suffer further by three aspects of the smoke on which they don't dwell.

1—There was a steam pipe in the area.

2—FBI tests showed the alleged assassination rifle produced only a "small amount" of smoke when fired; modern military gunpowder is smokeless.

3—NONE of the approximately 200 assassination witnesses questioned other than the four on the overpass, anywhere. Lane says only those on the overpass could see smoke from the knoll because of its elevation and the bushes around it. But those persons on the south side of Elm Street should have seen it, if there was any. They, not those on the overpass, were in a direct line of fire. None of them mentioned smoke.

* * *

Knoll Smoke Story Vulnerable

CAMPBELL was standing in front of the depository, as Lane mentions. He does NOT mention that at his elbow stood Mrs. Robert Reid, a fellow employee. Lane does NOT mention that Mrs. Reid testified:

"I turned to Mr. Campbell and I said, 'Oh, my goodness, I am afraid those sounds came from our building' because it sounded like they came just so directly over my head."

Two witnesses. Two versions. Both appear in the Warren report. Only one does in Lane's "Rush to Judgment."

* * *

"MANP other persons scattered throughout Dealey Plaza (which Elm Street runs through and the knoll and depository overlook) placed the origin of the shots (on the knoll)," Lane observes. And so they did. Jean Hill did. Billie Joe Lovelady did. William

Newman did. John and Faye Chism did. Roy Truly did.

At least 34 people did, although it is difficult to pinpoint from some of their statements. It is also not always easy to pinpoint the more than 60 witnesses who thought the shots came from the depository.

Such as:

F. Lee Mudd — "From the direction of the depository."

Charles Hester — "It appeared to be a building on the corner of Elm and Houston streets."

Charles Brehm — "One of two buildings on Elm and Houston."

Marion Baker — "High up, pretty sure from the depository."

T. E. Moore — "From a high area."

Allan Sweatt — "Vicinity of Elm and Houston."

Or the 15 people of the motorcade itself who thought the shots came from the "right rear."

Since almost none of such witnesses is mentioned in Lane's book, perhaps that is why he felt no need to mention such others whose testimony is helpful in locating the source of the shots.

Such as Mrs. Earle Cabell, the Dallas mayor's wife, who looked toward the depository at the sound of shots and "saw a projection" in an upper window. Or Bob Jackson, a press photographer, who also looked up at the depository and told colleagues in a motorcade press car, "There is the gun!" Or James Crawford, who looked up at the sound of the third shot, "saw a movement" in the southeast window of the sixth floor of the depository

and told a friend, "If those were shots, they came from that window." Crawford then advised police to search around some boxes he saw in the window. Police did. They found three rifle shells that were fired by a rifle also found on that floor — by that rifle and no other. Bullet fragments found in Kennedy's car also came from that rifle and no other.

Maybe Lane had the Mrs. Cabells and Bob Jacksons in mind when he said there is "some evidence" shots came from the depository. There is "some" evidence. No one saw a puff of smoke

there — only a rifleman.

* * *

EPSTEIN thinks there is "compelling" evidence shots were fired from the depository. But he faults the commission for not looking more thoroughly into the possibility of the knoll. He asks why the commission did not call the 10 witnesses who stood between the knoll and the president's car because nine of them "thought the shots had come from the knoll directly behind them."

If the commission did not call them, it did have their statements.

This is what they said:

A. J. Millican: He said he heard three shots from the depository area, two from the arcade and three more from the arcade but further away.

Charles Hester: He said "the shots sounded like they definitely came from in or around the depository building."

Abraham Zapruder: "I thought it (the gunfire) came from in back of me. Of course you can't tell when something is in line — it could be from anywhere."

"Q: Did you form any opinion about the direction from which the shots came by the sound. . . ?"

"A: No, there was too much reverberation. There was an echo which gave me sound all over."

Mary Elizabeth Woodward: She told the FBI the shots came "from possibly behind her" or from the overpass. However, because of the loud echo, she could not say where the shots had come from other than they had come from above her head.

Mrs. Hester: She was standing near the overpass

approximately in line with Kennedy's car and the depository. She said she could give no position for the shots other than to tell the FBI she believed she and her husband were in the line of fire.

The other four of the nine Epstein said identified the knoll did, indeed, think the shots came from there.

* * * *

EPSTEIN continues: "Eight witnesses were standing across the street from the knoll: all eight said they thought the shots had come from the knoll."

Actually, four of them did. One said she couldn't determine the source. Two thought the shots came possibly from the depository area. One said they came from one of two buildings at the corner of Elm and Houston. There are three buildings there, one the depository.

In the second chapter of his book, Lane writes: "Twenty-five witnesses are known to have given statements or affidavits on Nov. 22 and Nov. 23 — the day of and the day after the assassination — about the origin of the shots. Twenty-two said they believed that the shots came from the knoll."

* * * *

SHOULD one check the commission volumes, he

Bowers: "The sounds came from either from up against the school book depository building or near the mouth of the triple underpass."

Q: "You were not able to tell which?"

Bowers: "No, I could not."

Q: "Well, now, had you

had any experience before being in the tower as to sounds coming from these various places?"

Bowers: "Yes: I had worked this same tower for some 10 or 12 years, and was there during the time they were renovating the school depository building, and had noticed at that time the similarity of sounds occurring in either of those two locations."

Bowers' testimony doesn't rule out the depository. It doesn't rule out the depository. It does help those investigators trying to explain why witnesses to the assassination gave conflicting opinions as to the sound of the shots. If Bowers was helpful in this regard to Lane or Epstein, they didn't mention it.

Next: Confusion in a time of crisis.

would find that 23 people did give statements to law officials on those two days. Nine cited the knoll. Twelve cited the depository. Two indicated it could have been either.

There is a witness mentioned in another context by Lane whose testimony has some relevance as to the conflicting opinions of where the shots came from. He is Lee E. Bowers. He was working in a signal tower in the railroad area behind the knoll. His testimony is in Volume VI.